

K-314

Lusby House
359 High Street, Chestertown
c. 1860

On the south corner of High and Mill Streets this frame, three-bay, two-story house is essentially Italianate in design. Built in 1860, it is composed of a high front section and a lower rear wing and possesses a side-hall plan with two parlors in the front and two rooms and stair in the rear. Prior to a devastating fire in the 1970's, there was also a rear porch and semi-detached summer kitchen. Some of the decorative features which set it in a category of its own include the front entrance which is glazed with etched sidelights and transom, cornices over the door and windows which have brackets and applied fretwork. The cornice of the main house has ogee brackets with rosettes on their outer faces and fretwork applied to the sides to emphasize the shape of the brackets. At each corner there are turned drop finials.

The interior was well-finished, with fine mahogany stair railing and newel post and marbleized slate mantels in the double parlors. Like other houses of the period and houses that were updated in and around Chestertown at that time, there are tall double doors between the parlors. The rear wing was devoid of ornamentation, both inside and out.

The house was constructed on part of Lot No. 84, and according to Usilton's History of Chestertown, it replaced a one-and-a-half-story structure that was used for the rectory of Emmanuel P. E. Church between 1817-1856.¹ Because of its use, the building did not appear on the Tax Assessment of 1841. Its pre-1817 history is closely related to that of the

adjoining property.

The buildings' construction is well documented in the deed recorded in 1861 which reads as follows:

" . . . Whereas, on or about the thirty first day of December in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-nine the said Samuel Frazier contracted and agreed to sell to the said William O. Smith, part of the said lot of land so as aforesaid purchased of the said Richard S. Thomas, being 32' front by 132' back and hereinafter particularly described at and for the sum of \$320. And whereas the said William O. Smith has erected a Dwelling house and back building, on that part of the said lot of land so as aforesaid purchased by him of the said Samuel Frazier, and hath agreed to sell the same with that part of the said lot of land so as aforesaid purchased by him, to the said Richard Smyth at and for the sum of \$24,000 . . . "2

Since the initial deed had not been recorded, Martinet's Map indicated that the house was owned by Richard S. Thomas. He and the two aforementioned gentlemen joined together in a deed, January, 1861, to Richard Smyth, above.

Purchased in 1870 by Richard S. Usilton,³ the house was sold four years later to Mrs. Harrison Vickers.⁴ During the Vickers occupancy the small office was built between it and the house next door. Mr. Vickers' father, Senator George Vickers, lived diagonally across the street in a very large Italianate house which stood where the school was later built in 1903. Senator and Mrs. Vickers sold the house one year before they built their

country estate, Lauretum, near Whaland's Mill.

Josiah Lusby purchased the house in 1885, including a nine foot alley which Mrs. Vickers had purchased from a neighbor in 1877.⁵ Lusby owned Fancy Farm as well, but resided in town. The town house was passed to his son and grandson and remained in the family until 1965.⁶ Since that time the house has been converted into apartments, along with the office and studio of J. Tyler Campbell, photographer.

1. Usilton, Fred, A History of Chestertown, 1898, p. 67.
2. Land Records, Lib. JKH 2, fol. 408.
3. Land Records, Lib. JKH 8, fol. 602.
4. Land Records, Lib. JKH 12, fol. 361.
5. Land Records, Lib. SB 6, fol. 280.
6. Land Records, Lib. EHP 8, fol. 69.

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. K-314

Magi No.

DOE ___yes ___no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic P. E. Rectory

and/or common Lusby House

2. Location

street & number 359 High St. ___ not for publication

city, town Chestertown ___ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name J. Tyler Campbell and Margaret Worthington

street & number P. O. Box 373 telephone no.:

city, town Chestertown state and zip code MD 21620

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber EHP 121

street & number Cross Street folio 278

city, town Chestertown state MD

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title N/A

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. K-314

Condition

☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

On the south corner of High and Mill Streets stands a good Italianate residence that was constructed by Samuel Frazier, contractor for William O. Smith in 1860 on land that had been purchased of Richard S. Thomas. The house was built on a lot measuring 32' on High Street with 130' along Mill Street. The two-story frame structure was built with a large square front part with considerable detail and a rear service wing with little detail.

The building remains in good condition with few changes evident on the exterior. It is a three-bay-wide frame building on a tall brick foundation with one-story front porch across the three-bay facade. The entry is in the southerly bay opposite a set of wooden steps ascending to the porch. The entry has double doors with sidelights and transom glazed with etched glass. It has no architrave, but the vertical dividers between the doors and sidelights are paneled with brackets supporting a decorative cornice above. In the center of the cornice is a fretwork painted a contrasting color. Smaller cornices are found above the second story windows and all four on the Mill Street side.

The main cornice, which extends around the low-pitched hip roof has ogee brackets with rosettes on their faces and fretwork emphasizing the shape of the bracket. At each corner is a drop finial. Paneled pilasters are located at each corner of the body of the house.

Between the house and adjoining office building (357) is a one-story, one-bay frame structure with dentil cornice. The porch has square columns above brick piers having lattice work between. Between the columns is a plain balustrade except on the south side and that has an X design. The porch cornice has a fascia of jig-saw work in Gothic shapes.

The Mill Street facade, as stated above has four windows, all between the two chimneys, which are visible only above the roof. All windows have 6/6 sash and louvered blinds. Set back from Mill Street facade is a four-bay two-story wing which has a one-story porch, with brick paving. The entire side is very plain in contrast to the decoration of the main part. From the corner of the main part along Mill Street is a picket fence of pointed 1x8's. A partial basement, beneath the main section, is accessible from the side porch.

Prior to c. 1907 there was an attached summer kitchen on the back gable and an enclosed porch along the back which was accessible from the one-bay office. A fire destroyed a large part of the back wing and the summer kitchen.

The plan of the house consists of a side hall and double parlors in the front section. The rear section, prior to the fire consisted of two rooms separated by an enclosed stair, the last room being the kitchen. In the one-bay addition adjoining the next house is a very small office.

Part of the hall has been enclosed for the apartments which were installed in the 1960's, but the balustrade is still partly visible and has a bold newel post and two turned balusters per step. It is very typical of the period. Both parlors have marbled slate mantels with arched openings. Between the parlors are double doors. The rest of the building was inaccessible.

8. Significance

Survey No. K-314

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Lusby House is a significant example of Italianate architecture in a rural town that is well preserved and has served the needs of 19th century gentlemen including Harrison Vickers, an attorney and Joshiah Lusby, a gentleman farmer. The house has an unusual plan, a town-house plan, in a county where most of the Italianate houses had a central hall.

The house was constructed on part of lot 84, and according to Fred Usilton (A History of Chestertown), it replaced a one-and-one-half-story structure that was the rectory for Emmanuel P.E. Church between at least 1817-1856. Because of its use, the building did not appear on the tax assessment of 1841. Its pre-1817 history is closely related to the history of the adjoining property (357).

As stated in #7 above, the building's construction is well documented in the deed recorded in 1861 which reads as follows:

"...Whereas, on or about the thirty first day of December in the year eighteen hundred and fifty nine the said Samuel Frazier contracted and agreed to sell to the said William O. Smith, part of the said part of a lot of land so as aforesaid, purchased of the said Richard S. Thomas, being 32' front by 132' back and hereinafter particularly described at and for the sum of \$320. And whereas the said William O. Smith has erected a Dwelling house and back building, on that part of the said lot of land so as aforesaid purchased by him of the said Samuel Frazier, and hath agreed to sell the same with that part of the said lot of land so as aforesaid purchased by him, to the said Richard Smyth at and for the sum of \$24000....."

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Joshiah Lusby purchased the house in 1885, including a nine foot alley which Mrs. Vickers had purchased from a neighbor in 1877. Joshiah Lusby owned Fancy Farm at this period, but resided in town. The town house was passed on to his son and grandson, finally leaving the family in 1964. Since that time the house was converted to apartments which capacity it still serves, along with the office and studio of J. Tyler Campbell, photographer.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-314

Kent County Land Records, Courthouse
Usilton, F. The History of Chestertown, 1899

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification _____

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael Bourne

organization Historical Society of Kent County date March 1996

street & number P. O. Box 665 telephone 410-778-3499

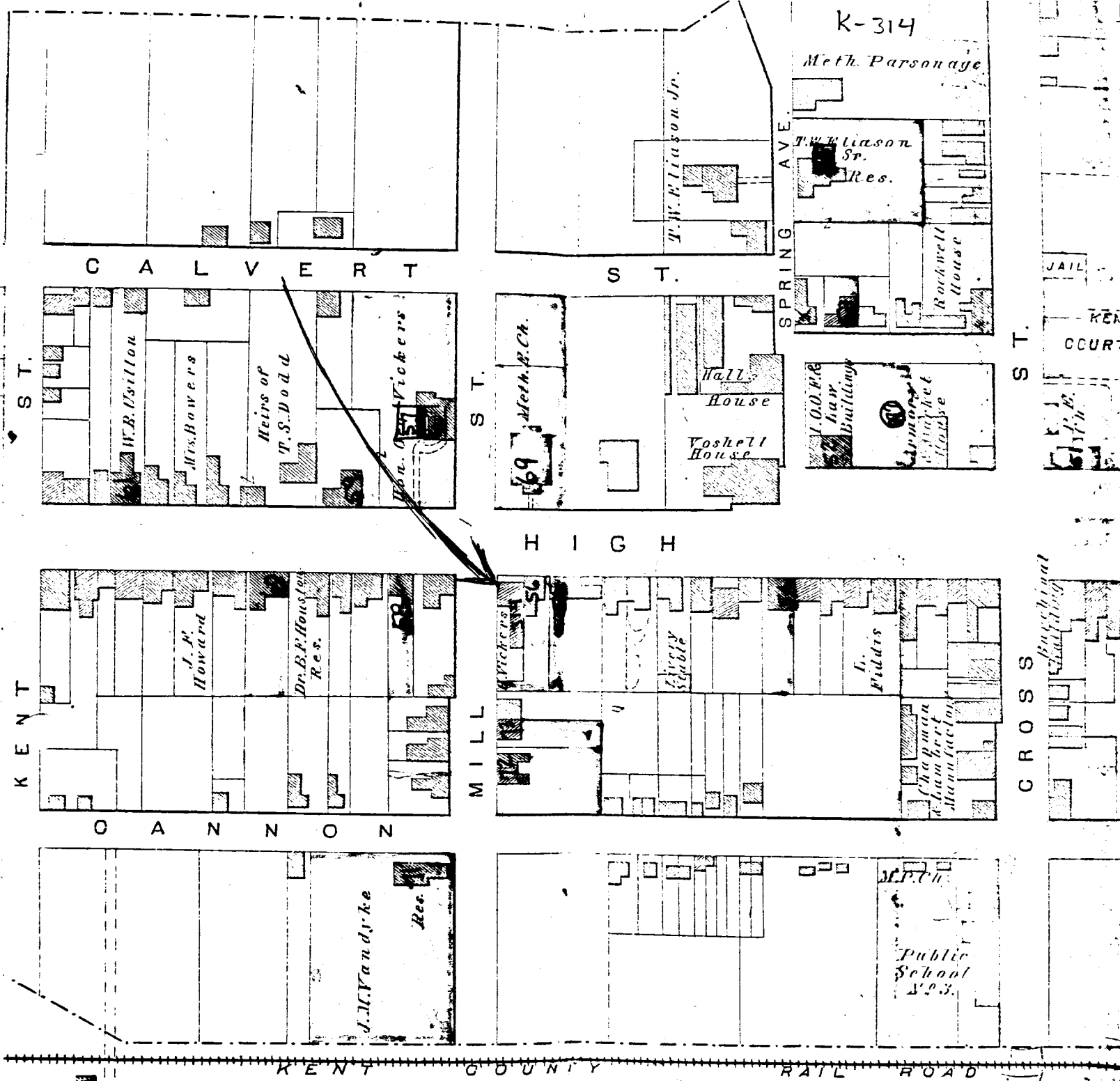
city or town Chestertown state MD 21620

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by
an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated
Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and
record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of
individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

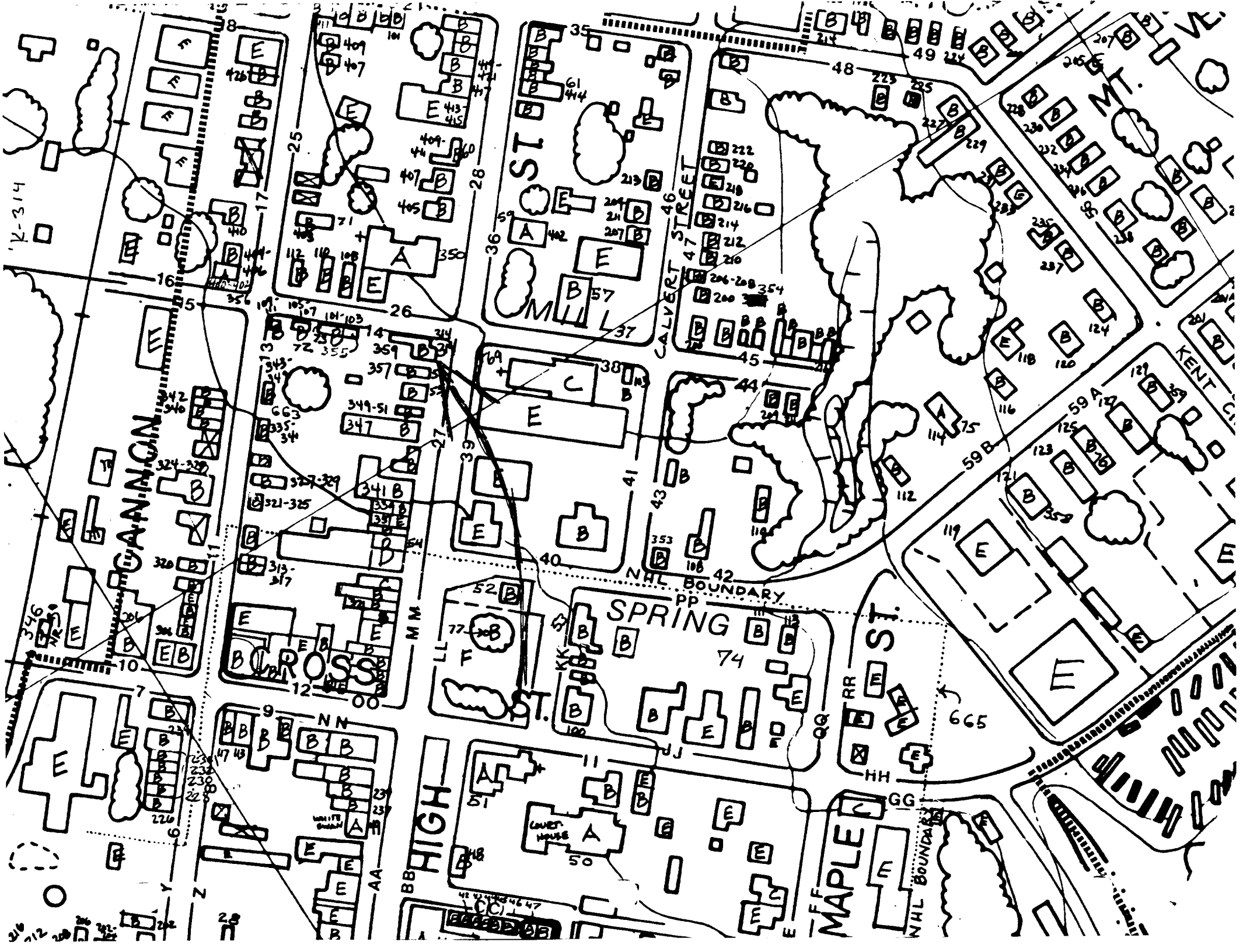
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7600

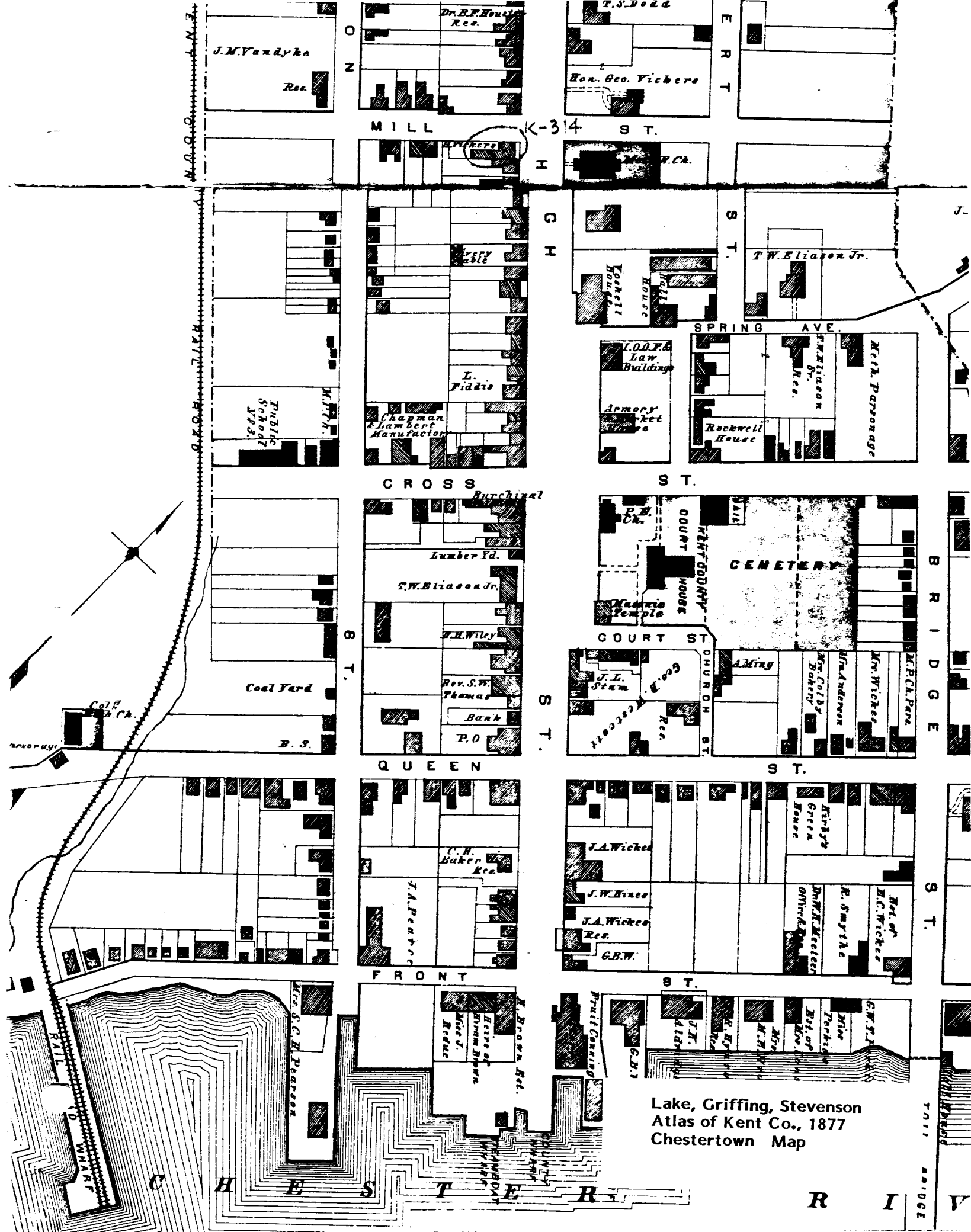


CHESTERTOWN (INcomplete)

An Illustrated Atlas of Kent and
 Queen Anne's Counties, Maryland
 Lake, Griffing and Stevenson
 Philadelphia, 1877

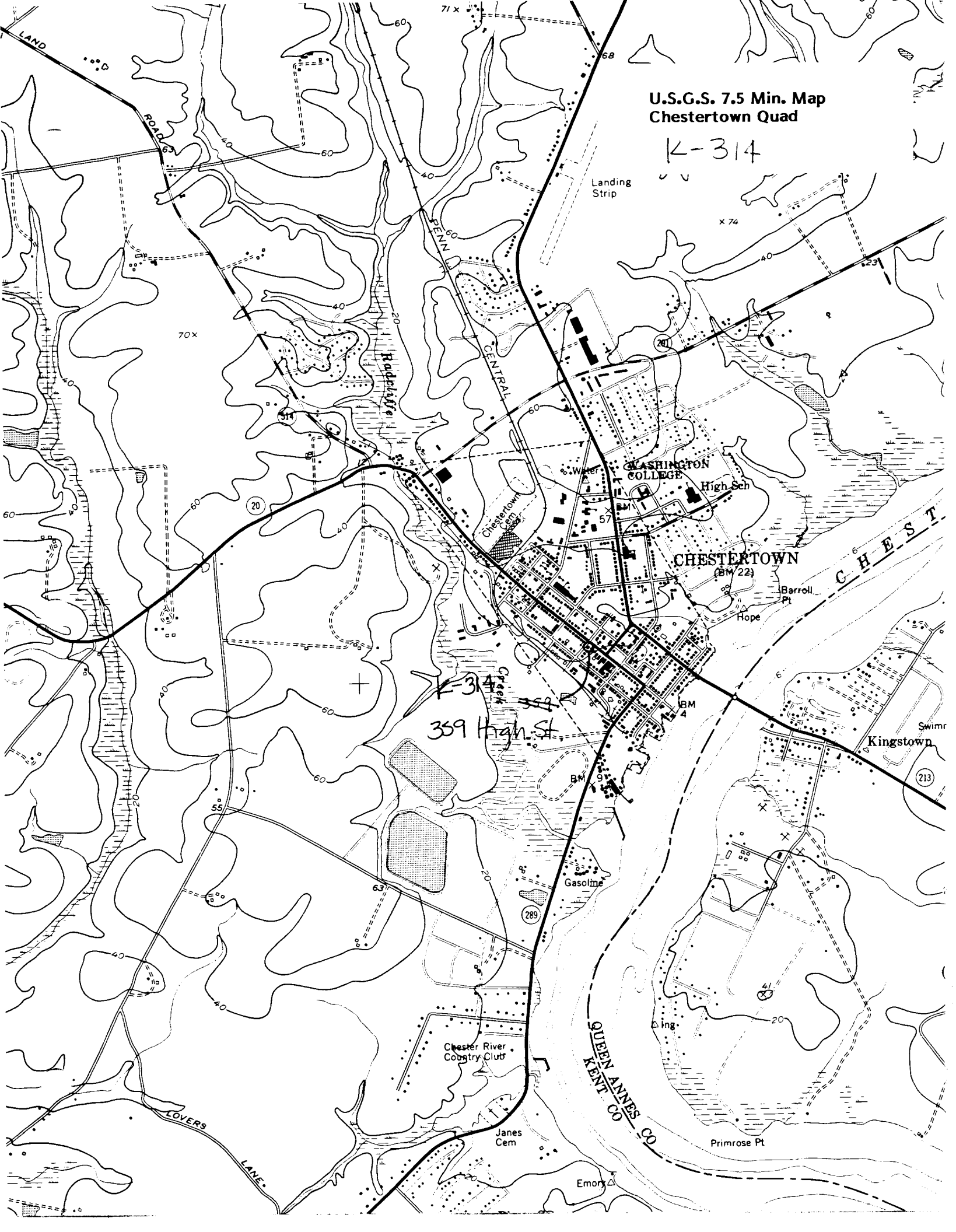
MAB 5/4/71





U.S.G.S. 7.5 Min. Map
Chestertown Quad

K-314





Lusby House K-314
359 High St.
Chestertown

from the North

Michael Bourne
March 1996